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SECURITY INFORMATION

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

10 April 1953

SUBJECT: TERMS OF REFERENCE: NIE-90: SOVIET BLOC CAPABILITIES THROUGH MID-1955 (Draft for consideration by Board of National Estimates)

THE PROBLEM

To estimate Soviet Bloc capabilities for political and military warfare, through mid-1955.

Note

1. The terms of reference for the Appendices to NIE-90, SOVIET BLOC CAPABILITIES THROUGH MID-1955, were agreed upon by the IAC representatives on 3 March, and contributions for the Appendices are due during the week of 13 April. The terms of reference for the Appendices were concerned with the political, economic, scientific, and military factors affecting Bloc capabilities and with Bloc military and political warfare strengths.

2. The terms of reference for the basic document NIE-90 supplement the terms of reference for the Appendices and refer to Bloc capabilities for political and military warfare through mid-1955. The terms of reference for the Appendices requested estimates of the impact of Stalin's death upon Bloc capabilities, but obviously the changes now occurring in the USSR and the development of the struggle for power within the Kremlin must be considered again both in the Terms of Reference for NIE-90 and in NIE-90 itself.

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NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐

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QUESTIONS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

I. BLOC CAPABILITIES FOR MILITARY WARFARE, THROUGH MID-1955

- A. What is the capability of the Bloc ground forces to initiate and maintain concurrent operations in Western Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East?
- B. What is the capability of the Bloc air forces to initiate and maintain concurrent offensive air operations against Western Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East? What is the capability of the Bloc air forces to initiate and maintain offensive air operations against the US? What is the capability of the Bloc air forces to initiate and maintain all of the operations concurrently?
- C. What is the capability of the Bloc naval forces for offensive and for defensive operations? What is the capability of the Bloc naval forces for amphibious operations?
- D. What is the capability of the Bloc to defend itself against air attack, including atomic attack?
- E. How will these Bloc military capabilities develop during the period of this estimate?

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1. How would Bloc military capabilities be affected if the struggle for power within the ruling group should spread to the Soviet Army and the Soviet Security Forces?
2. How would Bloc military capabilities be affected by changes in Soviet foreign or domestic policy: e. g., how would these capabilities be affected by a reorganization of Soviet agriculture, by the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Eastern Germany, by the conclusion of an armistice in Korea, by the conclusion of an Austrian peace treaty?

II. BLOC CAPABILITIES FOR POLITICAL WARFARE, THROUGH MID-1955

- A. What are the Bloc capabilities, area by area (Western Europe, Middle East and Africa, etc.),
 - (a) to establish Communist governments through constitutional process or by revolution and (b) to influence the attitudes and policies of non-Communist peoples and governments?
1. What are the political strength and stability of the principal governments in the area?

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2. What are the political orientations of the principal non-Communist opposition groups?
 3. What are the strength and influence of each of the Communist Parties?
 4. Does the economic situation offer opportunities for Bloc economic pressure and other forms of political warfare? What are the Bloc capabilities for influencing neutrals through economic pressure?
 5. What is the susceptibility of the people of each important country to Communist propaganda, to military pressure, to conciliatory gestures, and to other political warfare techniques?
 6. What is the attitude of the people toward rearmament? Toward the East-West struggle?
- B. What is the over-all outlook for Bloc political warfare capabilities during the period of this estimate: (a) to establish Communist governments through constitutional process or by revolution and (b) to influence the attitudes and policies of non-Communist peoples and governments?
1. How would Bloc political warfare capabilities be affected if the struggle for power should spread beyond the ruling group?

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2. How would Bloc political warfare capabilities

be affected by:

- a. Maintenance of Bloc courses of action along the lines estimated in NIE-64 (Part I)?**
- b. Revised Bloc tactics and courses of action involving conciliatory tactics, settlement of some issues outstanding between the Bloc and the West, and "harsh" tactics (e. g., increased pressures on Berlin and Indochina)?**
- c. Growth of Western unity, resolution, and political, economic, and military strength?**
- d. Division within the West, weakening of Western resolution, and decline of Western strength?**

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